



Idaho Commission for Libraries

Strategic Plan

2009-2012

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Idaho Commission for Libraries

Agency Profile

The Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICFL) is located in the Executive Branch of state government and is governed by the Board of Library Commissioners, which is appointed by the State Board of Education.

The State Librarian, appointed by the Board of Library Commissioners (I.C. 33-2504), serves as the agency's chief executive officer and is charged with implementing the Board's policies and rules and with managing the operations of the agency. In our relatively flat organization, all employees work to support the agency mission to assist libraries to build the capacity to better serve their clientele.

ICFL has its origins in the Columbian Club of Boise, which established the Traveling Library System in 1899. In 1901, the Idaho Free Library Commission was organized as a state institution and received its first appropriation. In addition to providing reading materials to Idaho citizens via the traveling library, the agency was to assist in the establishment and improvement of free public and school libraries throughout the state, and to deliver, foster, and promote library services in Idaho.

Beginning in 1957, ICFL was designated as the Idaho recipient of federal funds under the Library Services Act (LSA), and it was appropriated a significant increase in its general fund budget to provide the match necessary to receive the LSA funds. The federal program has evolved



Idaho Commission for Libraries

Agency Profile

over the years, first to the Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA), and most recently to the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA). LSTA funds are used for pilot projects, to implement collaborative projects among Idaho libraries, and for statewide programs that offer benefits to all Idaho residents.

Other significant benchmarks in the agency's history include:

- In 1972, legislation passed that charged the agency with distributing Idaho state public documents through a system of depository libraries.
- In the same year, the State Legislature directed the agency to establish a library for the blind and others who could not use regular print materials.
- In 1984, library development services (continuing library education, consultant services, and statewide planning) were expanded as a response to major changes occurring in the public library community.
- In 2002, after a 20% budget cut over two years, the Board discontinued several direct services and revised the agency mission to focus on statewide library development. With legislation passed by the 2006 Legislature, that mission was codified, the name of the agency was changed to the Idaho Commission for Libraries to better reflect its activities, and the Board was renamed the Board of Library Commissioners.



Idaho Commission for Libraries

Agency Profile

The 2008 legislative session produced two more substantial changes in the agency. The resulting FY2009 appropriation included ongoing operating and personnel funds for five (5) new positions to implement and maintain the programs:

- Legislation amended IC 33-2505 by replacing the state documents depository library system with a digital repository for state publications and instituting simpler requirements for compliance.
- The first of a planned 2-year line item request for state funds to significantly expand the Read to Me early literacy program was approved.

Our customers, Idaho's libraries, tell us that consistent with national trends the demand for their services is growing. Idahoans (kids, adults, students, parents, business people) want traditional library services, 24/7 electronic information services, and a place - physical or virtual, local and global - to participate in community conversations. The libraries' challenge is to plan for and maintain the necessary trained staff, collections, and technology to deliver this range of services when and where people want them. Our challenge is to help Idaho libraries sustain their services and thrive in this rapidly changing environment.



Idaho Commission for Libraries

Vision and Mission

Vision:

Idaho libraries are the nexus of global information, innovative services and community, enabling us to sustain our history, empower our present, and create our future.

Mission:

The Idaho Commission for Libraries assists libraries to build the capacity to better serve their clientele.

"A vision is a description of the preferred future. It captures the best elements of your past and present that you wish to continue, and the most attractive elements of the future that your heart desires. The best visions change as you move toward them."

- Glen Hiemstra



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Values

Library Ideals: We believe libraries exist for the public good. They are essential to literacy and informed citizens in a democratic society. We affirm intellectual freedom, life-long learning, customer privacy, and public access to information.

Customer Service: We deliver high quality customer service to internal and external customers.

Relationships: We achieve organizational effectiveness through mutual support, trust, value, and respect.

Collaboration: We accomplish goals using shared leadership, teamwork, and consensus.

Learning Organization: We continuously improve services by creating, gathering, and transferring information and modifying behaviors to reflect new knowledge and insights.

"The biggest single threat to what libraries are to become is indifference. If people don't care, if they don't come, if they don't pay attention to us, if they don't support us, if they don't think what we do is important, then it's over."

- Joe Janes



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Strategies

- Advocacy
- Collaboration
- Communication
- Consulting
- Continuing Education
- Grants
- Marketing
- Research, Planning, and Development

"A strategy is a direction implying a set of actions to be sustained over some period of time, in order to move toward the vision. 2020 Vision identified strategies to be led at the state level, and recommended local strategies to be taken up by individual libraries and districts."

- Idaho State Library
2020 Vision



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Strategic Issue I

How do Idaho libraries strategically position themselves to actively create and embrace the future?

External Factors

Major changes have occurred over the last 20 years in all areas of information services. The initial technology explosion is in the past. Rapid change is now a constant and even more dramatic change is predicted. The profiles of our users and potential users have changed drastically. Preschoolers are computer literate and seniors love communicating via e-mail. These were predictions of the future not that long ago; now they are the facts of everyday life.

If librarians are interested in providing library services to these rapidly changing generations in the future, we must take action now. Library staff and governing bodies must work on learning foresight: a skill that enables us to anticipate many of the risks and most importantly the opportunities. We need to understand current trends and their possible consequences while considering the variety of options we have for achieving our goals. We cannot wait for proof of what lies ahead or how things are going to develop. The tools are out there to help us better serve all of our clientele if we have the skill to listen to what the future has to tell us.

"Knowing how to think about the future is becoming increasingly urgent as the pace of change in our world accelerates."

- Edward Cornish



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Strategic Issue I

A. Goal: Libraries incorporate the 2020 Vision into their strategic planning.

- 1. Objective:** Develop events to keep the Idaho library community engaged with the future.
- 2. Objective:** Identify and make available strategic planning training opportunities.

B. Goal: Library leaders dedicate time to shape the future.

- 1. Objective:** Generate and share innovative ideas.
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C. Goal: Awareness and understanding of the disparate ways information is accessed and processed creates valued services.

- 1. Objective:** Develop events to keep the Idaho library community engaged with the emerging trends in information access.
- 2. Objective:** Develop, coordinate, provide, and support programs and services to meet the needs of different populations.

"Fear not for the future, weep not for the past."
- Percy Bysshe Shelley



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Strategic Issue II

How do Idaho libraries develop and sustain services valued by digital natives?

External Factors

Digital natives are those who have grown up with digital technology beginning in the last decades of the 20th century. Computers, video games and cams, the Internet as well as the wide variety of cell phones have been common everyday toys and tools in their lives since infancy. These natives of the digital age are low users of current library services. To make library services useful to this and succeeding generations, we must study their information needs and discover ways to meet them. Failure to reach and serve digital natives and the generations that follow them may well make libraries obsolete.

"The future now belongs to societies that organize themselves for learning. What we know and can do holds the key to economic progress."

- Ray Marshall & Marc Tucker



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Strategic Issue II

A. Goal: Libraries embrace and enhance digital natives' approach to information.

- 1. Objective:** Create events targeted to the needs of digital natives.
- 2. Objective:** Advance the development and expansion of libraries' web presence.
- 3. Objective:** Identify and promote information technologies.

"The future is not something that just happens to you. The future is something you do."

- Glen Hiemstra



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Strategic Issue III

How do Idaho libraries create and promote a vital identity?

External Factors

Stereotypes of libraries and librarians hamper our ability to deliver good library services. We have years of misconceptions to overcome. We want libraries to be recognized as an essential part of education. Increased communication and interaction among all types of libraries is needed to best meet citizens' diverse needs. To most citizens a library is a library is a library. We do not want cookie-cutter libraries. We know communities are different and need different services.

The preferred future vision says that "Idaho libraries in 2020 are strongly branded, so that when people in Idaho think of libraries they think of dynamic places of passion and opportunity." Without a vital identity, libraries may face disappearance in the future.

"Preferred Future Planning is not really about the future. It is about folding the future back on the present so that you can make better decisions today."
- Glen Hiemstra



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Strategic Issue III

A. Goal: Libraries flourish as a central place in a learning society.

- 1. Objective:** Develop, coordinate, provide, and support reading and literacy programs and services.
 - 2. Objective:** Provide and support access to information.
 - 3. Objective:** Provide professional development opportunities and training in multiple formats.
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B. Goal: The citizens of Idaho identify their libraries as vital.

- 1. Objective:** Raise awareness about libraries.
- 2. Objective:** Survey and evaluate library programs and services.

*"Everything possible today was at one time impossible.
Everything impossible today may at some time in the future be possible."*

- Edward Lindaman



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Strategic Issue IV

How do Idaho libraries sustain an infrastructure that provides services in an atmosphere of innovation and change?

External Factors

Quality library services are the basis for a good reputation and the foundation for building the services of the future. Library staff and governing boards must deal with the demands of the present so we can position ourselves for the future. To do this successfully, the underlying base of the library organization needs to be strong and healthy. At the 2020 Vision Think Tank, Gregory Raymond said, "It is important to keep in mind that we need to look at both continuity and change. When people examine the future we tend to look around the corner and emphasize what will be different. But in fact not everything changes." The challenge is in making sure the continuity provides us something strong upon which to build the future. There needs to be more than a tolerance for change. Failure to anticipate and embrace change will weaken current services and doom those of the future.

"The future enters into us in order to transform itself in us, long before it happens."
- Rainier Maria Rilke



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Strategic Issue IV

A. Goal: Libraries thrive in an environment that encourages innovation, risk, and change.

- 1. Objective:** Utilize members of the library community to develop statewide programs and services.
- 2. Objective:** Encourage libraries to develop and deliver innovative programs or services.
- 3. Objective:** Advance library development through ICFL staff endeavors.

B. Goal: Libraries' infrastructures empower service development and delivery.

- 1. Objective:** Maintain, revise, and develop opportunities for basic services.
- 2. Objective:** Provide training for statewide programs and services.
- 3. Objective:** Promote and encourage resource sharing.
- 4. Objective:** Promote and encourage access to information and library services.
- 5. Objective:** Coordinate and support initiatives that improve library services.
- 6. Objective:** Hone and vitalize library organizational structure.

"Most people still seem unaware that the basic rules are changing ... It means reevaluating issues in new terms ... The straight-line future runs flat into a wall."

- Alvin Toffler



Idaho Commission for Libraries

Strategic Issue IV

C. Goal: Leaders inspire passionate commitment to libraries.

- 1. Objective:** Promote and support outreach projects that require partnership.
- 2. Objective:** Encourage staff to serve on library association and community boards and committees.
- 3. Objective:** Identify and make available leadership training opportunities.
- 4. Objective:** Raise awareness of libraries with opinion leaders.
- 5. Objective:** Promote and present library programs and services.

"Do not limit your children to your own learning, for they were born into a new time."
- Ancient Proverb



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Measuring Success

Idaho Commission for Libraries will judge success and progress towards the goals by tracking the following:

- LiLI Databases Sessions/Logins
- LiLI Databases Full Text Views
- Talking Book Service Patrons
- Talking Book Service Circulations
- Attendance at Public Libraries
- Continuing Library Education
 - Events Sponsored/Participants
- E-Course Completions

"Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future."

- John F. Kennedy



Idaho Commission for Libraries

Performance Measures with Benchmarks

- 1. Percentage of Idaho citizens who identify libraries as important.**

Benchmark: 90%

Explanation: The *18th Annual Idaho Public Policy Survey*, conducted by Boise State University, finds 95% of Idaho citizens identify libraries as important.

<http://ppa.boisestate.edu/ssrc/>

Long Overdue: A Fresh Look at Public and Leadership Attitudes About LIBRARIES in the 21st Century indicates nearly half the sampling graded libraries with an “A,” the highest for any of the community institutions covered in the survey.

<http://www.lff.org/documents/LongOverdue.pdf>

- 2. Percentage increase in interlibrary loans through LiLI Unlimited**

Benchmark: 2% annual increase

Explanation: Expectations are based upon the increase in Idaho libraries' interlibrary loan statistics.

Baseline: 98,921 interlibrary loans through LiLI Unlimited for July 2005-June 2006 (FY06), the first complete fiscal year of the program.



Idaho Commission for Libraries

Performance Measures with Benchmarks

3. Percentage increase in LiLI Unlimited participating libraries

Benchmark: 5% annual increase

Explanation: Now that the phased implementation of the program has ended, we will be encouraging membership of those libraries who, for a variety of reasons, chose not to join during the start-up period.

Baseline: 57 libraries as of June 30, 2005 (FY05).

4. Percentage increase in registrations at summer reading programs

Benchmark: 10% annual increase

Explanation: Reasonable expectations are based upon Idaho statistics and the staffing capabilities at the local public libraries.

Baseline: 27,632 registrations for the summer of 2004.

5. Value of the LiLI Database licenses if purchased individually by all libraries compared to actual cost.

Benchmark: V>A

Explanation: To remain a viable service, the value (V) of the database licenses if purchased individually by all libraries needs to be greater than the actual cost (A). LiLI-D contract runs January-December.